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PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

The Nature of Truth; an Essay, by H. H. JOACHIM. Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1906. pp. 182.

Pragmatism, a New Name for Some Old Ways of Thinking; popular lectures on philosophy, by W. JAMES. New York, Longmans, Green & Co., 1907. pp. xiii, 309.

These two works lie too far beyond the confines of psychology to receive detailed treatment in a psychological journal. They offer, however, an excellent illustration of that fundamental difference of temperament which Professor James lays at the basis of all philosophical differences; and they remind us that the psychology of temperament is so far in its earliest infancy.

Mr. Joachim dismisses pragmatism, in his preface, as unworthy of serious consideration. "In substance the doctrine remains what Plato proved it to be: not a new theory of truth, but a denial of truth altogether." His own object is to "examine certain typical notions of truth, one or other of which . . . has hitherto served as the basis of philosophical speculation." The first of these regards truth as correspondence; the second, as a quality of entities entirely independent of mind; and the third as coherence. These are discussed in as many consecutive chapters, and the essay concludes with a fourth chapter on the negative element and error. The upshot is that "the coherence notion fails of complete success; but it has carried us further into the heart of the problem than either of the other two notions, and it has maintained itself against difficulties to which they succumbed."

Professor James—who does not fail to signalize the mainly negative outcome of Mr. Joachim's essay as, in so far, an argument in his own behalf—presents pragmatism, in eight Lowell lectures, as essentially a mediator, methodologically and metaphysically, between absolute idealism and empiricism. The lectures deal with the present dilemma in philosophy—namely, the antithesis just mentioned; the meaning of pragmatism as method; the pragmatic attitude to some metaphysical problems, such as substance, God, free will, design, the one and the many; the relation of pragmatism to common sense; pragmatism's conception of truth; pragmatism and humanism; pragmatism and religion. The book makes delightful reading; but it does not appear that the fundamental confusion often charged to the account of the pragmatist, the confusion of truth with knowledge of truth, is finally cleared up. And it may be doubted whether the middle position finally recommended will satisfy many temperaments, since a temperament, however mixed its origin and character, generally leans with some bias to the one philosophical side or to the other. To put the matter crudely, Professor James will probably be too religious for the non-religious, and not religious enough for the religiously minded.

P. E. WINTER.

Essay on the Creative Imagination, by T. RIBOT. Translated from the French by A. H. N. Baron. Chicago, Open Court Publishing Co., 1906. pp. xix, 370.

M. Ribot holds an unique position among descriptive psychologists.